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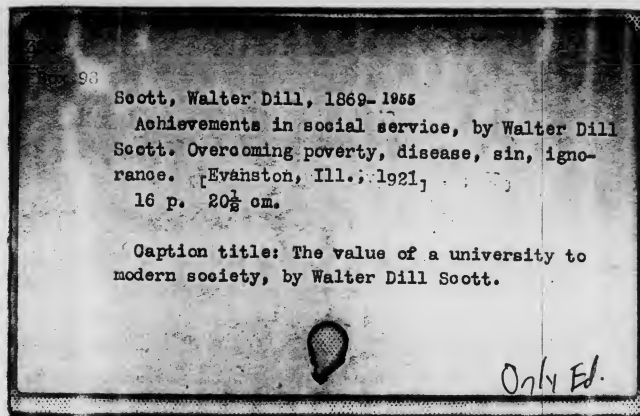
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Achievements  
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Social Service

by WALTER DILL SCOTT

Overcoming

Poverty  
Disease  
Sin  
Ignorance

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## The Value of a University to Modern Society

by WALTER DILL SCOTT,  
President, Northwestern University

EVEN those of us who are most closely associated with Northwestern University may think of the institution in various ways. One of us may think of her as a civic institution of Chicago or of the Northwest Territory and may compare her with other institutions of this area. Another may think of her as an educational institution associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church and may compare her with other institutions of Methodism, or with other institutions associated with other religious bodies.

Such conceptions and comparisons may be true, but they are not fundamental. We shall never understand Northwestern unless we think of her as an institution of social service, and compare her with other agencies in that class.

## Social Service Agencies

All institutions of social service may be grouped into four classes: First, those institutions that seek to overcome suffering produced by poverty; second, those that seek to overcome suffering produced by disease; third, those that seek to overcome suffering produced by sin; fourth, those institutions that seek to overcome suffering produced by ignorance. The first may be represented by an almshouse; the second by a hospital; the third by a church; the fourth by a schoolhouse. These are the four institutions of social service, and every man with noble impulses and a generous disposition allies himself with one or more of them. Northwestern University, as an educational institution, must be classed, therefore, as an institution whose primary service is to overcome the effects of ignorance.

At this time it is my purpose to consider the relation of Northwestern to allied institutions and to discuss her co-operation with the agencies in the allied fields, namely, with the agencies which have to do with the overcoming of suffering resulting from poverty, from disease, and from sin.

## Overcoming Poverty

The giving of alms to relieve the temporary suffering resulting from poverty has been stressed by all peoples and in all ages. Charity has always been regarded as one of the cardinal virtues and is often interpreted as the giving of alms. In the history of the world there has probably never been a greater need for charity in this narrow sense than today. Starvation exists not only in China, but in what have been the more prosperous countries of Europe. The appeal now being made in the name of relief for the hungry is more insistent and more impelling than ever before, and I trust that all of us have responded most generously. But because of this unusual post-war condition, we are likely to lose a sense of perspective and to exaggerate the importance of the mere giving of alms. Experts in charity assure us that the giving of alms never reduces the number of paupers, but, on the contrary, increases them; that every country in every age will have as many paupers as it will support by alms; and that all too frequently the receiver is injured rather than benefited. They emphasize the point that the aim of all charity should be to

develop self-supporting men and women, and to secure for them an opportunity for self-support. It is only in this latter and higher sphere that Northwestern may be said to have contributed largely to the work of charity.

We have in Northwestern today about two hundred and fifty-five disabled ex-soldiers. In the ordinary treatment of disabled men, we might expect many of them to develop into paupers and become objects of charity. These two hundred and fifty-five are today in training and probably every man will leave the University as a self-supporting man and will become a useful citizen in his community. Not only are these students trained as to their capacities, but they are given ideas and ideals which make for prosperity for themselves and for their community.

The case of a recent graduate will make this point clear: There was a member of the Cigar Makers' Union who was elected as a "walking delegate" of his union. He was a radical and a disturber, and believed that society owed him a living. To make himself more effective as a labor leader he entered one of the night classes in our School of Commerce. In that

class he got a new conception of the relation of capital to labor. His interest increased, and he was graduated in a diploma course of the School. Today he is the president of a company and an employer of labor. He is a progressive, but he is not a radical. Instead of increasing the suffering produced by the calling of strikes and the throwing of men out of employment, he is today a successful business man, adding to the prosperity of the community in which he lives. He is doing much to inculcate good will between capital and labor, and thus to make possible a harmonious, effective and prosperous community.

Individual members of our faculty have contributed largely in reducing the poverty and in increasing the prosperity throughout an entire industry. Some ten years ago one member of our faculty became interested in labor conditions in an industry that had been infamous for its sweatshops and its abuse and oppression of labor. In that industry poverty reigned in the homes and the bread-lines were a regular occurrence. This professor co-operated in producing more harmonious relations between

employer and employes, in raising the standards of the industry, in lifting the burden of poverty from hundreds of thousands of men and women, and in making the industry efficient and profitable.

The departments of instruction of a College of Liberal Arts are thought by some to be impractical. Such a conception does not represent the facts. A concrete illustration will make this clear.

The whole nation of Albania is in need because of the results of the World War. The rulers realize that the giving of alms will not regenerate the people. They believe that an illiterate and ignorant people will never be self-supporting. They believe the nation can never prosper unless they can develop an educated and self-respecting people. They have called on the Department of Education of Northwestern University to co-operate in establishing a national system of education from the kindergarten to the university. The head of our Department of Education will in the next few weeks go to Albania to co-operate in installing a system of education

which doubtless will result in the development of a self-supporting people.

### Overcoming Suffering

In the instances here cited, and others that might be recalled, Northwestern University has done more to relieve permanently the suffering from poverty and to develop self-supporting men and women than could be done by the giving of millions in alms.

The second agency of social service mentioned was that of relieving the suffering resulting from disease. Northwestern University is a large direct contributor in this field. Last year we gave assistance at our Medical Dispensary to approximately 42,000 patients, and at our Dental Clinic to approximately 15,000 patients. This direct service, however, is insignificant in comparison with the indirect but more constructive service rendered by individual graduates and members of the faculties. These Northwestern men have reduced the suffering caused by disease, and have restored the joy of health and strength by their distinguished service in the classification of tumors; in the description of the gas bacillus of

gangrene; in the contribution to the permanent elimination of yellow fever; in the discovery of the method of the transmission of Rocky Mountain spotted fever; in important advances in the surgery of the hand; in the more humane treatment of the insane and mentally deficient; in original investigations in the bacteriology and pathology of dental caries and of chronic infections about the teeth; in the discoveries in the pathology of pyorrhea alveolaris; in the origination of methods of treatment of fractured jaws; and in the development of a technique of Operative and Prosthetic Dentistry.

All these instances are less than the contribution which has been made by our professional schools in the fundamental work of these institutions as manifested in their leadership in medical and dental education. Our Medical School was the first American medical school to enforce a standard of preliminary education; to adopt longer annual courses of instruction; to initiate a graded curriculum in which the studies were assigned in logical order; to prepare the way by laboratory departments for the practical clinical branches, and to develop a

close co-operation throughout the course of instruction between the laboratory and the clinic. Our Dental School has without question established its leadership among the dental colleges of the world, and has inaugurated many teaching methods which were afterwards adopted and are now in use by most of the other colleges.

Our medical and dental missionaries scattered in practically every heathen land have rendered distinguished social service in relieving suffering, but more in promoting the medical and dental sciences in these lands.

All this work of Northwestern University may seem less direct than the giving of a cup of cold water and the building of hospitals, but in this indirect service which the University has rendered it has done more to prevent the suffering produced by disease than could have been done by the expenditure of millions of dollars in relieving the suffering of those who were already sick.

### Overcoming Sin

The third form of social service with whose agencies Northwestern University is co-oper-



ating to relieve suffering is that which overcomes the suffering caused by sin or wrongdoing.

When this suffering is caused by the wrongdoing of others, it becomes what we call injustice—a violation of human and of moral law.

In relieving suffering due to injustice the Law School of our University contributes directly in seeking justice through the Legal Clinic, the Legal Aid Society and through the Legal Aid Bureau of the United Charities. All of the staff of the Legal Aid Bureau of the United Charities of Chicago are alumni of our school, and annually this one bureau assists 10,000 persons who have been made to suffer because of the wrongdoings of others. The Law School has rendered distinguished service not so much by the concrete instances here cited as by constructive work in preventing such suffering by the improvement of the law and by advances in legal education and legal procedure.

But the other and more universal form of suffering produced by wrongdoing is that which

is visited upon the wrongdoer himself as a consequence of his sin. Much of such suffering is in the nature of penalties, moral or physical, social or individual, directly following the wrongdoing, and can only be eliminated by eliminating the sin itself. Men must be turned away from sin by the force of some idea. This is the work of religion and must be done by the winning power of the great idea in religion. We believe the Christian religion the most winning idea in the world, and the elimination of suffering caused by sin becomes the task of the Christian religion, by the spreading of its hold in the mission field and the deepening of its power in the countries already Christian.

We should like to believe that the world is becoming better so fast that the need for this form of service is being eliminated. But the facts warrant no such optimism. The spread of Christianity has not been as rapid in the world as we had hoped. Mohammedanism is the faith of more persons than Protestantism. Not only that but Mohammedanism is spreading more rapidly than Protestant Christianity. Within Christianity, on the other hand, there has been an almost universal recrudescence of

sin as expressed in crime in Germany, England, France, Italy and particularly our own America, where our responsibilities first lie. There are more arrests for murder in Chicago than in all England and Wales combined. There are annually approximately three thousand burglaries in Chicago, seven thousand in New York and two thousand in London. The loss by burglary is so great in America that burglary insurance in our cities is from fifteen to twenty-fold higher than in European cities. We may estimate the millions that are stolen, but we never can estimate the injury done by producing these criminals. The loss of property is deplorable, but the development of criminal character is much more serious. In the midst of all this crime the sense of sin seems to be dulled. The call to repentance is not heeded, and the "mourner's bench" has ceased to be a significant part in our modern church life.

In meeting this force of sin, thousands of churches, chapels and missions have been built; millions of Bibles and religious tracts have been printed, but the one essential thing to make these effective is the trained religious leader

who can use them as tools. The great need of the church today, the great need of any institution that attempts to overcome the power of sin and relieve the suffering caused thereby is trained men and women. I am willing for the moment to forget the service that Northwestern renders to all other forms of social service and to have her judged in terms of her co-operation with this central agency of social service, the church. Is she failing here, or is she making a worthy contribution?

Those of us who attended college in the latter half of the last century remember the good old days when class prayer meetings were held by each class every Wednesday night in college buildings. We remember the spirit of thrift, industry and piety that permeated the student body. When we survey the campus of today we question whether there is present the same religious atmosphere that once pervaded those sacred halls. There is no doubt but that there has been a change. Some of us, however, believe that the change has been for the better. The question can only be settled by a consideration of the facts.

First as to the curriculum. When we compare

the course of instruction of former generations with the announcements of the present catalog, it is perfectly clear that the change is one of progress. More attention is given today in our curriculum to religious instruction than ever before in the history of the institution. Furthermore, experts in the field have assured me that there are more and better courses in Religious Education and History of Religions and Missions offered today in Northwestern University than in any other American university or in any university in any other land. It is, of course, apparent that we cannot judge a university by its catalog. It is necessary to discover the results being produced in the lives of the students. Are we today developing at Northwestern religious leaders? Historically, we have.

We are today in touch with one hundred and fifty-seven men and women bearing degrees from the College of Liberal Arts who are at work in the missionary field under the Foreign Missionary Board or the Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. When we realize that the total number in service under these two boards is

approximately eighteen hundred, and that we are in actual touch with one hundred and fifty-seven of these, it is apparent that Northwestern has produced as much as ten per cent of all the missionaries for all the world for the Methodist Episcopal Church. We have no estimate of the number of our graduates who are serving under various other boards, or of former students who did not graduate who are today serving in the foreign field. (Students of Garrett Theological Seminary, although it is located on our campus and is closely associated with the University, are, of course, not included in any of this discussion.) All must admit that in the past we have made great contributions, but some may suspect that this service belongs to the past and is not being continued at the present time.

On our campus today are thirteen foreign missionaries on furlough who are working for advanced degrees. There are forty students preparing themselves for service in foreign fields. We have one hundred and one men and sixty-two women who are preparing themselves for religious work in some form, such as the ministry, home missions, foreign missions,

and the Y. M. C. A. This is the greatest number preparing for religious work ever assembled in our College of Liberal Arts. If judged in terms of development of religious leadership, Northwestern University has met the test in the past and is meeting it even more successfully today!

### Overcoming Ignorance

I have attempted at this time to visualize the co-operation which Northwestern is giving to the three agencies engaged in social service, namely, relief from suffering produced by poverty, by disease and by sin. On another occasion I desire to sketch the service that she is rendering in her own field, namely, that of education. Only in so far as she co-operates successfully with other agencies and succeeds in her own field of education is she worthy of the title of Greater Northwestern.



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